

ST. THOMAS UNIVERSITY STUDENT POLICIES AND STANDARDS

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION

The University requires each student registering in every Distance Education course to provide verification of his/her identity. Each student is responsible for protecting the secure login and pass code assigned him/her. Furthermore, the student may be required to participate in other designated activities that allow the University to confirm that the registered student participating in courses, assessments and evaluations, and being granted credits or credentials is one and the same person.

ASSIGNMENTS AND DUE DATES

The material for this class represents a broad range of topics collected based on their relevance to you, both academically and professionally. The weekly topics leading to your final paper or final assessment, although presented in a logical manner, are in reality a dynamic process requiring both focus and flexibility on your part and must be as follows:

1. All assignments are to be in Times New Roman or Arial, 12pt font and in APA format
2. Late assignments will not be accepted unless permission has been obtained from the instructor in advance.
3. Each assignment will be due on the date listed unless stated otherwise in class schedule in Calendar and Reading sections of the Syllabus or on Canvas.
4. All final assignments, projects and tests must be completed and submitted by the date shown in the course Calendar and Reading section of the Syllabus.
5. All written assignments must be double-spaced, word-processed and submitted as requested by the due dates.
6. Students should keep a copy or file of their papers and all graded assignments returned to them until the end of the semester.
7. Students are expected to submit high quality assignments during this course. In this regard, ensure that your submissions are edited and grammatically sound. The quality of the exposition and the content will certainly impact the grade of each assignment, and subsequently the final course grade.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Students may be penalized for assignments which are submitted late. Consistently late assignments can impact the final grade of this course. In the case of late assignments, the instructor will weigh the quality of the submission versus the lateness to determine the grade for the assignment or the course.

GRADING PROCEDURES

All assignments are to be completed prior to the next week class sessions or according to the specific due dates indicated and instructions described in **“WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS”** section above. Students are expected to participate fully in all online discussions and to submit postings on time. Students will be assessed by the level and quality of their participation (postings) in the discussions. **For this online course, all assignments will be submitted via Canvas**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COURSE SYLLABUS

Whether in hard copy or electronic format, this is the only version of the syllabus and is the "official" syllabus of record for the course. You are required to read and acknowledge that you have read it by posting your acknowledgement to the Discussion Board in Canvas under the appropriate link. You may post some critical comments on this syllabus to which others are welcomed to respond. This is one avenue for providing input in the syllabus at the beginning of the course.

PREPARATION FOR ONLINE CLASS INSTRUCTION

Attendance and participation are crucial to students' enjoyment of the course, meeting the stated course outcomes and student grades. Class "attendance" is measured both by the level of students' class participation and their physical presence whether online or in class.

1. Students for "online" classes are expected to do much of the work individually or in groups, even if they do not physically "attend" scheduled classes.
2. All online classes meet throughout the designated period for this course (see dates listed earlier in the syllabus).
3. Because of the accelerated nature of this class, course time is limited, and students must make optimum and creative use of the course time allotted.
4. Students are expected to log into the online class daily, and complete all required course activities (projects, presentations, assignments, daily/weekly journals, WIKI's, papers, etc.) by the deadlines set out in **Course Calendar and Readings** section of this syllabus.
5. For this online course, students will be required to use the Canvas Learning System™ for discussions.

COURSE EVALUATION AND PROCEDURE

St. Thomas University greatly values the input of students regarding their experiences with their courses and professors. All course evaluations are done online by the students, via Canvas at the end of each course. The course evaluation must be completed during the designated week of the course.

NON-PARTICIPATION

If the student never logs on to class (online) and does not successfully initiate a course drop request, that student receives a UW grade. A student may also receive a UW grade when that student has met all four of the following: a) never participated in the Discussion Board forum, b) never submitted any assignment, c) never took part in any assessment and d) never participated in any learning group activity. To receive credits for that course in the future, the student is required to re-register for the course and pay the full course fee.

PARTICIPATION

Attendance and Non-attendance do not apply to distance education as it does to classroom-based courses, due to the nature of distance education. However, in the event that a distance course is a hybrid with specified onsite sessions, attendance at those sessions becomes part of the course's student evaluation mechanism. In all other cases, participation alone is considered. Participation in a Distance

Education course is measured by the level and quality of learners' daily/weekly contributions to discussions, completion and submission of assignments, and performance on assessments (on tests/exams, quizzes, papers, etc.). Any student who misses 40% or more sessions without the permission of the instructor or department is considered "not" participating sufficiently to pass the course shall receive an "F" or fail grade for that course. Under specific conditions described below, an instructor may award an "I" grade.

AWARDING AND COMPLETING THE "I" GRADE

Instructors can only assign an "I" or incomplete grade when a student has maintained a satisfactory performance for at least 50% of cumulative course requirements. Awarding the "Incomplete" (I) grade is at the sole direction of the instructor. A student receiving an "I" grade can fall into one of two categories: Category One and Category Two.

COMPLETING THE "I" GRADE (CATEGORY ONE STUDENT)

Category One applies when the student has maintained a satisfactory participation and performance for at least 50% of cumulative course requirements, but in the opinion of the instructor has not performed sufficiently to pass the course, and would require major future participation to successfully pass the course. In Category One, the instructor must inform the student in writing (e.g., email) that the "I" grade is being awarded on condition that the student registers and retakes the entire course at a later date, at which time a grade change will be made by the instructor. Under category one, the student will re-take this course as an "audit" and pay the equivalent of one credit for the course.

COMPLETING THE "I" GRADE (CATEGORY TWO STUDENT)

Category Two applies when a student has maintained a satisfactory performance for at least 50% of the cumulative course requirement and, at the discretion of the instructor, the level of work needed to successfully pass that course was minimal and could be completed easily by the student submitting the deficient or outstanding work. In Category Two, a grade change can be made without requiring the student to retake the entire course. The instructor must inform the student in writing (e.g., email) of the conditions under which the course must be completed, including timelines.

CHANGING AN "I" GRADE

When a Category One student is required to register in order to complete a course and receive a grade change, the student must pay the credit audit fee. If the student re-takes the course with a different instructor, the new grade must be sent to the instructor who had originally issued the "I" grade, who then initiates the grade change with the Office of the Registrar.

A student who receives an "I" grade and does not retake the course within the University's published time-frame will automatically receive an F grade by that date and will be required to register, pay in full for the course and successfully pass the course in order to earn credit.

COURSE ATTENDANCE

Class “attendance” is required to successfully complete all online courses. Students are expected to be prepared for all weekly sessions. Assignments and other course work must be completed and turned in on time as set forth in the Course Syllabus. All courses have a standardized format for submission of assignments and homework.

Weekly attendance (and participation) is mandatory. On rare occasions when a student is unable to participate online for a week, the professor may accommodate that student by assigning course work appropriate to achieving the course outcomes. Online threaded discussion requires the students to participate weekly because grade points are awarded for participation by topics and by week. If a student does not participate in the Discussion Board, the student does not get a chance to “make up” that week’s discuss and receives “zero” points for that week.

Students who are unable to participate in threaded discussion sessions over a prolonged period should contact the instructor prior to the time they will miss to make alternative arrangements. Consult the St. Thomas University Student Handbook's policy on attendance and tardiness.

Unlike traditional courses, this distance education course relies on the dynamics of student-teacher interaction and positive group dynamics, and processing to integrate and apply the learning of academic content. The distance education model also emphasizes the development and practice of interpersonal communication skills and teamwork (e.g., group problem-solving and negotiation). The format, therefore, necessitates class participation through the Discussion Board, small group activities and other specific assignments and projects.

WITHDRAWAL FROM A COURSE:

It is not true that withdrawing from a course simply means “not showing” up or stop participating in that course. Please ensure that the policy on withdrawing from a course at St. Thomas University is clearly understood.

At St. Thomas University, in order for a student to withdraw from any course, it is NOT SUFFICIENT for the student to stop attending class or to inform the instructor of his or her intention to withdraw. St. Thomas University’s policy states that any student wishing to withdraw from a course must do so formally through BASIC. Any student whose name appears on the final official roster for the class will receive a letter grade based on the percentage of points earned, even if the percentage of points is "0" and the letter grade is an "F."

To officially withdraw from a distance education course, a student must consult with his/her instructor and advisor and complete the required “course drop” or withdrawal forms, which must be submitted to the University’s BASIC office, for students who can access this office physically. Other distance education students who do not have easy physical access to BASIC are advised to electronically submit their “course drop” or withdrawal forms through their academic advisors. A completed “Course Drop” form must have the signature of a Dean.

STRUCTURE AND SEQUENCE OF COURSE ACTIVITIES

The instructor reserves the right to change the course schedule if needed. Students will, however, be informed about changes in schedule a week in advance. See **Course Calendar and Readings** below for details of due dates and class schedules. Assignments and homework must be completed and turned in on time.

FINAL GRADING SYSTEM

Grades will be assigned based on the distribution scheme below.

100 - 93 = A	Excellent; superior	79 - 77 = C+	Above-satisfactory
92 - 90 = A-	Very Good	76 - 73 = C	Unsatisfactory;
89 - 87 = B+	With merit; good	72 - 70 = C-	Unsatisfactory
86 - 83 = B	Good	69 - 67 = D+	Unsatisfactory
82 - 80 = B-	Above-satisfactory	66 - 60 = D	Unsatisfactory
		59 - 0 = F	Failure

RULES (*ETIQUETTE*) FOR CLASS DISCUSSIONS AND FORUMS

Most primary online discussion postings (original response by each student) must be done by WEDNESDAYS at 11:00 PM and all “rebuttal” postings (responses to other students’ postings) by SATURDAY at 11:00 PM of each week.

Any posting that contains one or more of the following characteristics will be deleted from the forum and the student will not receive credit for it. Student will be notified (via email) about the deletion of the posting and given the opportunity to post a replacement message for credit:

1. Language that attacks the argument on purely emotional grounds.
2. Shouting – using words in all capitals.
3. Misspellings or grammar errors that compromise your ability to communicate.
4. Personal experiences or feelings that are not clearly employed to make a relevant point.

“Speaking” Rules for Online Class Discussion:

A course may prove to be very reflective, engaging and provocative in terms of ideas, arguments, and different, often unique personal experiences with the topics being addressed. In order to ensure that students and instructors are able to deal honestly, respectfully, and at the same time critically with the subject matter, particularly relating to personal or work experiences, it is essential that in disagreements about any point of view, each “speaker” will take responsibility for *his/her critical position and personal*

or work experiences or opinions and be able to distinguish between the two. Following these ground rules will help all participants to accomplish the course outcomes.

Guidelines for Participating in all Online Course Activities:

All class activities (including written assignments, projects, discussion Board, tests and papers) are to be completed prior to the next week class sessions or according to the specific due dates indicated on the course syllabus and instructions described in relevant areas of Canvas such as “**ASSIGNMENTS**”, “**ANNOUNCEMENTS**” or “**DISCUSSION**” sections. Students are expected to participate fully in all discussions and to submit postings on time. Students will be assessed by the level and quality of their participation (postings) on the Discussion Board.

COURSE STANDARDS

Students are graded on achievement, rather than effort. It is the responsibility of the student to be prepared for class each week. The University trusts that each student will maintain high standards of honesty and ethical behavior. All assignments submitted in fulfillment of course requirements must be the student’s own work.

Citing External Sources:

A particularly important part of writing a paper (as well as developing presentations) is giving credit to external sources used. In many cases, failure to cite external sources may also involve a paper being considered to be not in conformance with the Academic Honesty policy as outlined later in this syllabus, and/or result in a paper being considered to contain plagiarism. Be familiar with these areas as described in this syllabus, as well as defined elsewhere in St. Thomas University material, and note that citing sources includes having them in your references as well as citing them where appropriate. Sources which must be cited include:

1. Material from another source used word-for-word (direct quote);
2. Material from another source with some rewording (revised quote);
3. Material from another source put into your own wording (paraphrase);
4. Material for another course you have written.

At the very least, failure to cite external sources will be considered a significant lack of adherence to guidelines, and may be subject to a penalty. As stated previously, failure to cite sources may also have more serious consequences; particularly if the use of such sources without being cited is considered involving a significant portion of the content of a submitted assignment.

Non-Original Content (even if properly cited):

Without question, the use of external material in an assignment is strongly encouraged, as it can add value and supporting information to a paper or a presentation. However, it is important to note that assignments should generally consist of a substantial amount of original material (wording and ideas). If an assignment contains an excessively large percentage of content which is non-original, the assignment

will, in general, be marked down to reflect that. As an extreme example, if an assignment consisted of all non-original content, even if correctly cited as such, the assignment would generally be given zero points on the basis of not having any original content. Therefore, please make sure your assignments have an appropriate balance between cited and original content. **The maximum amount of properly cited, non-original content allowed in each assignment is 30%.**

Academic Honesty:

Academic honesty is highly valued at St. Thomas University. You must always submit work that represents your original words or ideas. If any words or ideas used in a class posting or assignment submission do not represent your original words or ideas, you must cite all relevant sources and make clear the extent to which such sources were used. Words or ideas that require citation include, but are not limited to, all hard copy or electronic publications, whether copyrighted or not, and all verbal or visual communication when the content of such communication clearly originates from an identifiable source. Please see the St. Thomas University Catalog for more information about academic honesty, including consequences of academic dishonesty (See Student Handbook).

Written assignments that include material similar to that from course reading materials or other sources should include a citation including source, author, and page number. Quotation marks should be used if the material is copied directly from the readings, and text citations should be used (for example, "Kozol, 1988, p.22"). If the material is paraphrased, "(Kozol, 1988)" should appear immediately following the paraphrased material. Failing to do so constitutes violation of St. Thomas University's policy. In addition, written assignments that are similar or identical to those of another student in the class is also a violation of the policy. The consequence for a violation of this policy is "zero points" for the assignment. Rewriting the assignment will not be an option. Finally, you may not submit the work of someone else as your own or work that you have submitted for another class.